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~~Top Secret~~

POLAND: Bleak Outlook for Consumers

Polish officials are predicting another decline in supplies of food and consumer goods during the rest of 1982. Fish, coffee, tea, and margarine will be in shorter supply, although the regime should be able to meet its ration obligations for meat, butter, flour, sugar, and liquor. Manufactured consumer goods that require imports of Western raw materials and spare parts will be increasingly hard to buy. [REDACTED]

Comment: Consumers are already disgruntled by the hikes in prices of food and consumer goods, and they will be further disturbed by the increased shortages. Stocks of many foods, especially flour, bread, and potatoes, will depend on the success of the harvest as well as the regime's ability to persuade farmers to sell their crops to the state. Supplies of consumer goods are unlikely to increase soon because Poland's hard currency shortage prevents it from importing enough materials from the West. [REDACTED]

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